

CLAIMS:

1. A method of processing an input video signal, including the step of adding of graphics metadata at least partially defining one or more graphics to the video signal so as to provide a processed video signal.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said input video signal includes pixel data and said processed video signal includes all of the pixel data in said input video signal.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the video signal is an analog composite video signal and the graphics metadata is inserted into one or more vertical blanking intervals of the video signal.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the video signal is a serial digital video signal and the graphics metadata is in accordance with MPEG-7 standards.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the video signal is an MPEG compressed stream.

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein said adding step is performed using a character generator subsystem operated by a human operator and the operator at least partially controls the graphics metadata added to the video signal.

7. The method according to claim 6, wherein the character generator subsystem is operated by a combination of a human operator and an automated computer system.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein said adding step is performed using a character generator subsystem operated under the control of an automated computer system.

9. The method according to claim 1, further comprising reading the graphics metadata in said processed video signal and inserting pixel data constituting graphics into the processed video signal so as to form a final signal incorporating one or more visible graphics, said inserted

pixel data being based at least in part on the graphics metadata in said processed video signal.

10. The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said step of adding graphics metadata is performed in a first video production system under the control of a first entity and said reading and inserting steps are performed in a second video system under the control of a second entity different from said first entity, the method further comprising the step of transmitting the processed video signal from said first video production system to said second video production system.

11. The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said step of adding graphics metadata is performed in a first video production system at a first location and said reading and inserting steps are performed in a second video system at a second location remote from said first location, the method further comprising the step of transmitting the processed video signal from said first video production system to said second video production system.

12. The method as claimed in claim 9, further comprising the step of storing the processed video signal and retrieving the processed video signal from storage, said reading and inserting steps being performed on the processed video signal after said retrieving step.

13. The method as claimed in claim 9 or claim 10 or claim 11 or claim 12, further comprising the step of modifying the graphics metadata read from the processed video signal to provide modified graphics metadata based in part on the graphics metadata in said processed video signal, said step of inserting pixel data including inserting pixel data constituting a graphic as specified by the modified graphics metadata.

14. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said modifying step is performed automatically.

15. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said modifying step includes replacing at least some of said graphics metadata in said processed video signal with modification data.

16. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said modifying step includes adding modification data to the graphics metadata in said processed video signal.

17. The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said graphics metadata in said processed video signal include data specifying a location for a logotype and said modifying step includes combining said location data with modification data specifying a particular logotype.

18. The method according to claim 9, wherein the inserted graphics includes computer generated graphics.

19. The method according to claim 9, wherein the inserted graphics include one or more style components.

20. The method according to claim 9, wherein the inserted graphics include one or more format components.

21. The method according to claim 9, wherein the inserted graphics include one or more content components.

22. A method of treating a processed video signal including pixel data and graphics metadata comprising reading the graphics metadata in said processed video signal and inserting pixel data constituting graphics into the processed video signal so as to form a final signal incorporating one or more visible graphics, said inserted pixel data being based at least in part on the graphics metadata in said processed video signal.

23. The method as claimed in claim 22 further comprising the step of modifying the graphics metadata read from the processed video signal to provide modified graphics metadata based in part on the graphics metadata in said processed video signal, said step of inserting pixel data including inserting pixel data as specified by the modified graphics metadata.

24. A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein said modifying step includes replacing at least some of said graphics metadata in said processed video signal with modification data.

25. The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein said modifying step includes adding modification data to the graphics metadata in said processed video signal.

26. A video processing system having:

- (a) an input for receiving an input video signal;
- (b) a character generator subsystem connected to said input, said character generator subsystem being operative to provide graphics metadata defining one or more graphics and add said graphics metadata to the input video signal so as to provide a processed video signal; and
- (c) a processed signal output connected to said character generator subsystem.

27. The video processing system according to claim 26, wherein said input is operative to accept said input signal as a serial digital video signal and said character generator subsystem is operative to embed the graphics metadata in the serial digital video signal.

28. The video processing system according to claim 26, wherein said input is operative to accept said input signal in the form of an analog video signal.

29. The video processing system according to claim 28, wherein said character generator subsystem is operative to insert said graphics metadata into one or more video blanking intervals of the analog video signal.

30. The video processing system according to claim 26, wherein the said input is operative to accept said input video signal in the form of an MPEG compressed stream.

31. A video delivery system comprising a first video processing system according to claim 26, one or more second video processing systems and a communications network

connected between said processed signal output and said one or more second video processing systems for conveying said processed signal output to said one or more second video processing systems.

32. The video delivery system according to claim 31, wherein at least one of said one or more second video processing systems is operative to read the graphics metadata embedded in the processed video signal and to insert pixel data constituting graphics into the processed video signal so as to form a final signal incorporating one or more visible graphics, said inserted pixel data being based at least in part on the graphics metadata in said processed video signal.

33. A video system according to claim 32, wherein said at least one of said one or more second video processing systems is operative to modify the graphics metadata read from the processed video signal to provide modified graphics metadata based in part on the graphics metadata in said processed video signal, and to inserting pixel data as specified by the modified graphics metadata.

34. A video processing system as claimed in claim 26, further comprising an archival storage element in communication with said output for recording the said processed video signal.